

The 13th

MEUsletter



News for the MEU team -
Marines, Sailors, family and friends

Vol. 5 Nov 03

www.13meu.usmc.mil

Update from the Colonel's Desk

INSIDE

Pg. 2-3

- S-1/Chaplain

Pg. 4-5

- S-2

Pg. 6

- S-3/S-4

Pg. 7

- S-6/PAO

Pg. 8

**- Disbursing
Force Recon**

Pg. 9-10

- Photos

Pg. 11

- Events

Families and Friends of the Fighting 13th,

I hope you all had as wonderful a Thanksgiving as we had here aboard the USS Peleliu, Germantown and Ogden ... turkey, ham, carved roast, potatoes both sweet and mashed, stuffing, corn, green beans, cranberry, shrimp cocktail and pumpkin pie. My hat's off to our outstanding cooks and messmen who worked so hard to make such a great meal for the Sailors and Marines.

I know there were empty chairs at some of your homes because your loved one is deployed out here. One of the things I am most thankful for this Holiday Season is the selfless young man and women who choose a life of service and protection for their country, their family and their friends. I am also very thankful for the loving families who give us constant support and encouragement – I am thankful for you.

In addition to Thanksgiving, we celebrated the 228th Marine Corps birthday in the United Arab Emirates;

another special occasion made even more special because we got to celebrate as a deployed warfighting unit. Not wanting to be outdone, some of our spouses got together back home and had their own ball! They dressed up in formal attire and had a lot of fun themselves – hopefully we won't cramp their style when we get back in April!

So enjoy this rather festive newsletter – as always, good stories and pictures from your own Marines, who make up the backbone of the 13th MEU(SOC). Take care and remember to Think 13!

Semper Fi,

Col. Mike Regner

CO, 13th MEU(SOC)



S-1's Sgt. Ragazzino (3rd from R) and fellow Marines and Sailors wish you a Happy Holiday Season!

S-1 Administration

Happy Holidays! During November, the S-1 enjoyed their port visit to Jebel Ali, United Arab Emirates. We started off the port visit completing cleaning and maintenance on our gear and equipment before having an opportunity to relax. Some visited the nearby city of Dubai, shopped at the mall, the Gold Souk, and the sandbox (vendors on the pier); went to movies; or took advantage of the tours provided through MWR. All in all, everyone kept busy and was able to enjoy some time off from the regular routine. On 10 November, we cel-

ebrated the Marine Corps' 228th Birthday with our traditional birthday ceremony.

Besides working and stopping for a port visit, the Marines are heavily engaged in expanding their minds. They are enrolled Pre-Algebra, State and Federal Government, and Criminal Justice. They are taking nine semester hours while being fully employed. They are doing a great job of balancing and managing their time.

Thanksgiving was a relaxing day. The afternoon started off with a 10K Turkey Trot on the flight deck. It was hot! Afterwards, the feeding festivities began. The food

was excellent. The ship really went through a lot of trouble to make the holiday special. It was definitely a 5-star meal. Dinner was complete with all the trimmings: tablecloths, turkey, ham, roast beef, mashed potatoes, green beans, stuffing, cranberries, fruit salad, assortment of potato, pasta, and green salads, fresh bread, pies, cakes, candy, nuts, sparkling cider, and the list goes on.

This month, we also had a birthday. We want to wish a Happy Birthday to LtCol Coogan.

To our family and friends, we hope you have a safe and Happy Holiday. Enjoy our personal card below.



Chaplain's Corner

This is your Chaplain speaking . . .

Greetings from the sea. A few things you may find interesting. . . We started a group called "Survival for Spouses at Sea." Marines and Sailors who have been married for a while talk about marriage with those who are new at the job or those who are planning on marriage soon. It has been a great help to them and they enjoy "training" and sharing ideas for the most important "job" of their lives! The Uniting

Through Reading program (SSgt Tuggle does the PR, and RP2 Duong does the taping) is steady, and we hope your spouse is taking advantage of video-taping him/herself reading books to your children. Kids LOVE this connection. The Catholic RCIA has grown into the largest regular program, with over 40 men and



More stuffing, anyone?

women deepening their faith through prayer and weekly study.

We've just finished our Thanksgiving meal, which, though it wasn't as good as your home cooking (!) was superbly done by our crew. It reminded us all of home, and as one Marine put it to me, "I'm a little homesick." I told him it was better to be a little

homesick than not at all. The alternative—not missing anybody you love—would mean you don't have anybody that loves you.

You

have all

been very demonstrative of your love-letters, emails, packages, etc.-and that makes a huge difference out here. Keep up the great support. We've even been getting items from people we don't know but with whom RP2 and I have been corresponding. They are connecting especially with those who don't have a lot of mail. So they are receiving letters from school children and adults across the country, placemats, care items, (even M&Ms)-and they all build us up. Thank you!

We prayed for you all especially today. We pray for you every night during evening prayer, and trust that you do the same for us. So shall we stay connected and strong with God's love!

Peace and God's blessings to you all!

Fr. Nielson
13th MEU Chaplain

S-2 Intelligence

Since Operation Sweeny in Southern Iraq, the Intelligence Section has been involved in a veritable Roller Coaster of mission support and interesting evolutions. From our well-deserved port visit in the United Arab Emirates to our recent trek down the Horn of Africa. During this time the Marines of the MEU S2 have of course exemplified themselves as a team and in many individual venues as well.

First Honorable Mention goes to the entire Intel Team for another well carried out port visit and liberty call in Dubai. Everyone carried themselves as the ambassadors of their Unit, the Marine Corps, and the Country. The people of U.A.E. will remember the USS Peleliu Team as a shining example of American exuberance and respect. The mature and responsible actions of everyone during a time when threats from Anti-American Sentiment and Terror are at an all time high, prove that no matter

where we go as Americans we represent all that is good and true in this world. During this time while ashore

Center shelters where clean and ready again to deploy into theatre wherever we are called to.



SSgt. Rose, SSgt. Tulifua and Sgt. Causey hit the books

in UAE our time on liberty was only matched by the dedication during the grueling work that had to be carried out initially. All the gear that went ashore in southern Iraq was of course in great need of cleaning and maintenance. The Marines of the S2 worked like a well oiled machine and didn't stop working until all Intel gear, vehicles, and the Combat Operations

Another noteworthy accomplishment was the Marine Corps Birthday Ball Ceremony where our own Sgt Phoebus again graced us with his musical talents, playing taps during the Colors Ceremony. It was a great feeling to celebrate the Marine Corps birthday while standing in the sand of a foreign land. The ceremony itself was well-structured and carried out in great Marine Corps fashion. While we celebrated our birthday in U.A.E. our spouses and loved ones at home were as well celebrating the Marine Corps Birthday at a MEU KVN ball. The Key Volunteer Network again showed their patriotic colors and dedication to us, by coming together and matching our logistics capabilities, (or maybe surpassed...). The celebrations both deployed and at home strengthened



Living It Up in The Sandbox at UAE: Maj. Sinicrope, SSgt. Tulifua, SSgt. Holder, Capt. Spooner, Cpl. Kelly, Sgt. Duckett, Sgt. Bradley

what our families and we stand for.

One thing to note is that several of our Marines did not get the chance to join us in U.A.E. because they were forward deployed to other areas in this theatre of operations. Sgt Bertsch and Sgt Osborn, both with our Counter Intelligence Detachment, deployed forward from the ship to support our BLT elements training in Djibouti. Both have provided intelligence support and force protection to these companies before their arrival in country. Their dedication has been ex-



emplary thus far, and they continue to do great things. Our Mobile Elec-

tronic Warfare Systems Team got their liberty cut short in U.A.E. as well to join these companies in Djibouti. Sgt Nashagh, Sgt Duckett, Sgt Bradley, and Cpl Thompson cross-decked to the Germantown while in port and pulled out, joining Sgt Cedroni and Sgt Miller for the journey to Djibouti. All of these Marines made sacrifices to carry out the missions and training that keep this team razor sharp.

Over the last month many individual accomplishments across the Intel team have been noteworthy. Participation in the college class program here onboard the ship has been breathtaking. The percentage of Marines from the S2 taking classes is staggering. Balancing their respective duties and furthering



their education has taken its toll on personal time, but the drive to be better than

selves has overpowered the needs for those luxuries. The S2 is again involved in another trend setting sign up in the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program (MCMAP). We have even included some of our Navy brothers and



sisters in one of the Tan Belt classes and they are thoroughly enjoying the pain.

We have had several Medals and recognitions during this time period, to include Good Conduct Medals, Coins and Commendations for superior performance while on duty. Sgt Meemken (Imagery Analyst), Cpl Lipp (Ground Sensor), and LCpl Ipina (Ground Sensor) – showed great technical and specialized performance and were nominated for Heros of the Week and to have write-ups submitted on the 13MEUSOC web page of their accomplishments. Sgt Meemken made an on the spot discovery on National Level Intelligence that could have caused serious problems with mission accomplishment. His keen eye and attention to detail probably saved lives. Cpl Lipp



and LCpl Ipina for fronted the test bedding of a system still in development and riddled with technical problems.

With the technical know how of these two Marines and the Guidance from our SARC Officer Lt Gill, they made a system work that was, until now, written off as broken. These are just a few of the great things that this team continues to do on a daily basis and there will be many more to come. This family of Intelligence Professionals continues to impress me every day we continue on with our deployment. Family and Friends of the the13MEUSOC Intel team, be proud of your Marines, and know that we all love and miss you.

S-3 Operations

I hope that everyone in the S-3 family is doing well. Your Marines are doing fine. We recently enjoyed a few days of liberty in the port of Jebel Ali, in the United Arab Emirates. The first order of business, however, was some much-needed maintenance and cleaning after our operations in Iraq. Days were spent getting vehicles, tents, and weapons ready for our next operations, and nights passed relaxing in the nearby city of Dubai, or at the 'Oasis' food and beer garden located conveniently on the pier. Dubai, about a half hour taxi ride from the port, is a modern city offering malls, western restaurants, and the famous gold souk (Arabic for mall or shop) where jewelry is a bargain. Marines not up to the ride into town only had to walk down the brow to the Oasis where they could enjoy a cold beer and some of America's finest fast food offerings—Burger King, Subway, Fudruckers, and Pizza Hut all did a brisk business. Other vendors offered CDs, DVD movies, Persian Rugs, and other souvenirs. The USO phone center was another popular stop in the Oasis and

S-4 Logistics/Supply/ Medical/HQ Cmdt

November has been an interesting time. The beginning part of the month found us at the port of Jebel Ali for a few days of liberty. No port visit is just liberty though. Sgt Childs and Sgt Cerca wasted no time getting busy maintaining the Command Element vehicles and getting them ready for the next exercise. WO Stotts and Capt Williams escaped ship life and headed off to Djibouti to coordinate logistics support for training exercises there. Capt East has been busy planning supply support for other upcoming exercises and spends many an hour in meetings (poor devil). Sgt Ettson along with Sgt Duncan and Sgt Pollick have been busy ordering parts and supplies and ensuring that whatever

hopefully all of you heard from your Marine during our stay there.

While in Jebel Ali, we also celebrated the 228th Birthday of our Corps. The day began with MEU PT followed by addresses from the BLT, ACE, and Command Element Sergeants Major. After a Navy shower and change of uniform, we formed up on the pier for a Marine Corps Birthday celebration with the traditional cake cutting ceremony followed by a buffet lunch.

Soon it was over and we sailed back out to sea. The enlisted Marines have made good use of their time and are in the middle of their second college semester aboard ship. In a few weeks, all will have completed 3 courses on top of their routine duties and work. You all can be proud of them.

We celebrated Thanksgiving last week and enjoyed turkey, ham, potatoes, stuffing, sweet potatoes, green beans, rolls and pumpkin pie. Even though we are far from home all us in our own way gave thanks for the things we have—our family, friends and each other. Thank you all for your support and Happy Holidays!

the MEU needs they get. Embark Section Marines are gathering information on all the equipment the entire MEU has onboard our three ships. Capt Ingram has been the steadying hand in that endeavor. LCpl Kong spent most of the month repairing weapons systems



and making sure that he has what he needs to support us ashore. Our fearless leader Maj Wolford took time out from his daily onslaught of meetings and planning cells to conduct the reenlistment of Sgt Ettson for three more years. Semper Fi to Sgt Ettson. If all this isn't enough to keep us busy, all of the enlisted Marines in our section have accepted the challenge to better ourselves and do more by attending college classes at night. We wish you all a Happy Thanksgiving and know that our thoughts and prayers are with you always.

S-6 Communications

Thanksgiving has just passed us by, as this month has gone with the blink of an eye. Jebel Ali was a welcome stop for the Marines and Sailors of the MEU, hav-



ing a chance to celebrate the Marine Corps Birthday during our stay. Maintenance played a very important role during our time in port. We had an opportunity to ensure operational readiness by inspecting and maintaining the communications equipment. It was a month filled with furthering education for most of the command element. The communications section has two newly promoted Cpl's for the month of November. Cpl Jimmy L. Tysiac from Phoenix AZ., and John B. Clark from San



Diego CA. Congratulations to both of the New Cpl's and continued success in your careers. Christmas is around the corner, along with another look into the world of S-6 communications. We send our thoughts and prayers to everyone.

Public Affairs

November was a busy month for the Public Affairs Office: lots going on in different places. SSgt. Tuggle spent the month in Djibouti, covering BLT and MSSG training in the Horn of Africa and sending stories and photos between snorkeling trips. She remains there to tell the story and is doing a great job. Sgt. Pascual has been assigned to the ship for November and December, where he is serving as a Master-At-Arms, enforcing the law aboard Peleliu and giving the "wood shampoo" to those foolish enough not to comply with his commands. Between shifts, he managed to put together a great collage from the outstanding photos taken during Operation Sweeney.

Sgt. Ledesma and LCpl. Leddy are doing good work for the government keeping up the require-

ments for the office – Sgt. Ledesma has been writing stories lately that recognize some of our individual Marines for their accomplishments, and LCpl. Leddy is becoming quite handy with the video-camera; you can look for short MPEGs on the MEU website. Sgt. Ledesma and LCpl. Leddy are also taking college classes and doing well in algebra, which embarrasses the PAO because he has to take his boots off to

count higher than 10.

LCpl. Leddy and Capt. P. enjoyed swim call last week; Sgt. Ledesma took photos as sun-deprived Sailors and Marines jumped off the port elevator 30 feet into the water below. All in all, things are great – by the time the next newsletter gets home, we'll have reached the halfway point of the deployment. Hope everybody's doing well and we'll see you before you know it.

Info That's Good To Know

MEU Information Hotline

866-676-0662. Once you hear a voice begin the menu, press 7, then listen for the message from the MEU Commander or the Family Readiness Officer.

MEU Sergeant Major

morinja@13meu.usmc.mil

MEU Family Readiness Officer

pelletierwf@13meu.usmc.mil

13th MEU Key Volunteers

CloutierMR@pendleton.usmc.mil

In case you forget your KV's information or if you can't get in touch with your KV, e-mail Melanie and she'll get you to the people or resources you need.

Disbursing

Marines of the Disbursing Office spent time in the United Arab Emirates for some well deserved and much needed liberty.

Lt. Puckett took full advantage of overnight liberty and enjoyed some fun in the sun at one of the local hotels and also made his way to the local market where individuals barter for goods.

The Hard Rock Cafe was a local hot spot, and offered a refreshing reminder of the good ol' U.S.A. with a miniature Statue of Liberty.

The "Sandbox" was the main point of gathering for the Marines as libation was cheap and their spirits were rich. Marines enjoyed food from Burger King, Popeye's and Subway. A much needed change from the usual feasting of chicken and potatoes, or chicken and rice, or chicken and gravy. The "Sandbox" offered provided such events as camel rides. SSgt. Lathrop is shown near one of these local animals, but couldn't seem to get too close as it kept trying to bite.

Swim Call was available and Lt. Puckett was itching to get back in the water. Lt. Puckett, who made sure to let the editorial staff knows that he is indeed a Water Survival Instructor, took to the water like a fish. Eager to jump off the elevator into the water, Lt. Puckett didn't need much time to adjust to show off his swimming capabilities. They gave him the rubber ducky award after the ceremony.



Cpl. Dehoyos enjoyed some time aboard the USS Germantown during a crossdecking, while Cpl. Boone was able to visit the USS Ogden.

Force Reconnaissance

The Force Recon platoon pulled into the scenic port of Jebel Ali on 5 November and looked forward to some well deserved Liberty. Prior to sounding liberty call, maintenance was performed on weapons, communications gear and vehicles. After ensuring all mission essential gear was cared for, the 25 ambassadors of goodwill headed out into the thriving metropolis that is Dubai. Sightseeing, shopping and fellowship were the order of the day and the platoon very much enjoyed taking in the local culture.

This idyllic interlude was interrupted on November 8th by the birth of Leianna Danielle Nelums, brand new daughter of SSgt. and Mrs. Josh Nelums. Mother and baby are doing fine. SSgt Nelums took time to reflect on the difficult balancing act of being a good father and warrior. The platoon held a prayer vigil in the sand box to aid him in during this difficult period of being away from family and friends.

On 10 November, the platoon celebrated the 228th birthday of the Marine Corps and Gunny Wilson's 40th birthday. After pulling out of Jebel Ali, the platoon resumed training it's busy training schedule, well rested from six fun-filled days in Jebel Ali and Dubai. Hooah.

Parting Shots



Look out below! (30 ft. below)



Doc Reboya and his swim buddy.



Indoor wave pool?



LCpl. Flores (L) and Cpl. Polance (R): The power in the messdecks.



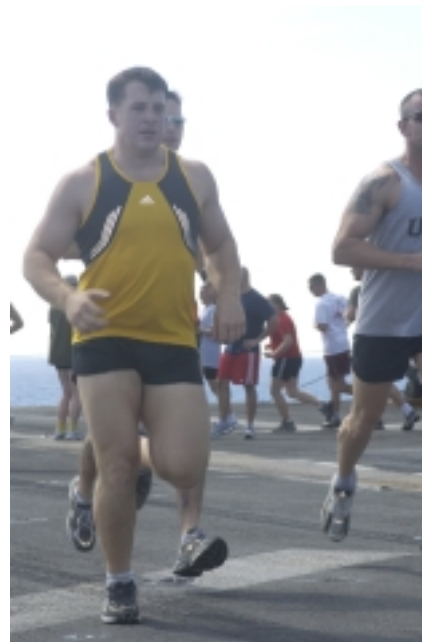
L-R: Lance Corporals Negron, Leddy, Morin, "Ahh Mosley," and SSgt. Manning enjoy a little Indian Ocean swimming.



LCpl. Willis, Sgt. Campbell giving thanks



Above: Sgt. Cerca croons, at right: the crowd swoons: below, Cerca, SSgt. Rojas and Sgt. Ledesma groove on karaoke tunes.



Marines and Sailors had a chance to work off their Thanksgiving feast before they even ate with a 10k Turkey Trot in the morning -- running 800 feet, then turning around, another 800, then turning around this went on for 6.2 miles. Sgt. Moeller, above, made it through the run AND dinner!

13th MEU CE Family Activity Calendar 2003 - 2004

All events are open to all family and friends of the 13th MEU...

Please contact Melanie at 760-430-0645 or email

RSVPS413thMEU@yahoo.com

If you plan on attending any event – at least one week prior to the event –

Thank You...

Date	Time	Location	Event
Dec 7	2 p.m.	Abbey Reinke Community Center	MEU Holiday Party
Jan	TBA	TBA	BLT sponsored Mess Night, ½ way dinner Event for adults
Jan 11	4 p.m.	Camp Pendleton Bowling Alley Conference Room	*Monthly Madness
Feb 13	TBA	TBA	Valentine Celebration Treat Ourselves Event for adults
Feb 22	4 p.m.	Camp Pendleton Bowling Alley Conference Room	*Monthly Madness
March	TBA	TBA	MSSG sponsored
March 21	4 p.m.	Camp Pendleton Bowling Alley Conference Room	*Monthly Madness
April 3	1 p.m.	San Onofre Community Center	MEU CE Return & Reunion Brief & Party
April 18	4 p.m.	Camp Pendleton Bowling Alley Conference Room	*Monthly Madness
End of April		Various areas depending upon the unit	13 th MEU RETURNS!!!